the representatives in the State were made liable for prosecution for statements made in such bodies, in their representative capacity This was a disgraceful state of affairs in a country like Travancore, which was a model State, with a civilized government.

The principle of communal representation accepted by the Government in the matter of recruitment to public service was not at all befitting a model State like Travancore. It destroyed the political consciousness of the people, so essential for the establishment of responsible Government, by encouraging communal discord in the scramble for offices. Similarly, the policy of giving undue encouragement and special concessions to men, who, though inefficient, were favourites of the authorities, was quite undesirable. Appointments and promotions should be made solely from considerations of efficiency.

In order to remedy the defects in the administration, which were the results of one man's rule, a Government that was responsible to the people should be established in the country.

195. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and other administrative reforms.

MR. K. RAGHAVAN PILLAI (*Chirayinkil taluk, Group I*) said that the question of the reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly had been urged on the attention of the Government by repeated representations in the present as well as the previous sessions of the Assembly. For many years past, the Government had been stating that the question was engaging their serious attention, but without any result so far. These vain promises only tended to destroy the confidence of the people in the administration. This was also proof of the irresponsibility of the authorities towards the people. The institution was in the past a very useful one both to the Government and to the people. But ever since the reform of the Legislative Council in 1097, he Assembly had lost its position and status. But it was doubtful whether it would be necessary any further to trouble the Government with the question of the reform of the Assembly. When Travancore became a partner of the new All-India Federation, now under contemplation, it would be necessary to have here also, as in the case of other provinces, an Executive Council, responsible to the Legislature. Unless it was decided to have a bi-cameral system of legislature, a second chamber, under the reformed constitution, the Assembly would have no place in the Federal Constitution.

For the last one year, the whole of British India was carrying on ntensive agitation for the attainment of self-government in the country and the Government were able to effect a peaceful settlement only on making a solemn promise to comply with the wishes of the people in the matter. This craving for self-rule was a common feature of all people who were subjected to the administration of an autocratic government. In all respects, Travancore had better claims for self-government than British India. In education, no other State or Province in British India was so far advanced as Travancore. According

to the last census, the percentage of literacy in British India was only 7·2 as against 28 in Travancore. The educational advancement of a people testified to their fitness for self-government. It was an accepted fact that the number of presses and Newspapers in a country clearly indicated the political consciousness of its people and their advancement in civilisation. On this basis also, Travancore was far more advanced than British India, in as much as for every 22 presses and 5·5 Newspapers in British India, there were 35 presses and 15·75 Newspapers in Travancore. No other Province in British India had as many co-operative societies, joint stock companies and banks and other institutions as in Travancore. Under the circumstances, it was a great pity, if Travancore which was most fitted for the introduction of responsible Government, should continue to be subjected to an irresponsible and autocratic administration.

The condition obtaining at present in Travancore was most deplorable. The people suffered innumerable hardships as a result of the defective administrative policy of the Dewans who wielded the administration of the State from time to time. The administration of the State completely vested in the Dewan and not on the Sovereign of the State. But the Dewan was not at all responsible to the people. The numerous resolutions passed in the Legislative Council, the various representations made in the Assembly and the many valuable suggestions made by the Newspapers in the country were all disregarded and the policy of administration was shaped according to the whims and fancies of the Head of the Administration. The utter irresponsibility of the administration was clearly seen in their railway policy. Though the people were agitating for the extension of the Railway line from Kottarakara to Alwaye and from Trivandrum to Cape Comorin, the Government had most recklessly invested a very large amount of the people's money for the Chakkai-Tampanoor extension. Many vagaries were committed both by the Railway officers and the contractors. But the Government was helpless in the matter. The attitude of the Government towards the Shertallai incident was another instance which proved the irresponsibility of the Government. Corruption was rampant in the Police, Excise, Judicial and Registration Departments. Open bribery was never so prevalent at any time in the history of the State. There was inordinate delay in the working of the administrative machinery. Delay was noticed most in filling up vacancies in public service. New posts were often created for the sake of individuals. The attitude of the Government towards the Press was most unsatisfactory. The Government had attempted to stifle many of the Newspapers in the country. All communities were not equal in the eye of the law in the matter of awarding punishments. There were still many roads, tanks, wells and *satrams* constructed at the cost of the public, reserved for the use of certain privileged communities.

In conclusion, the member said that there was general discontent among the people on account of the present state of affairs in the country and that the only remedy for all these evils was the early introduction of full responsible Government in the country.